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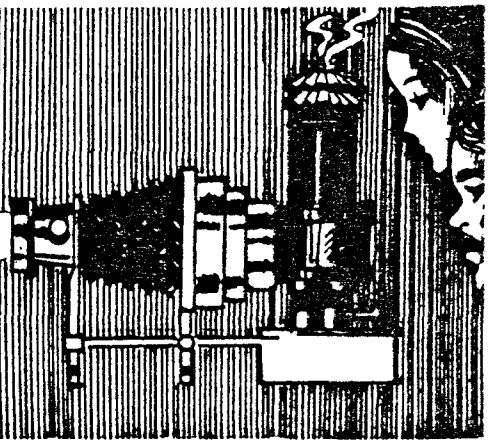

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THE MAGIC LANTERN - A FAMILY HISTORY

By John Carter Borton, Jr.

It was Winter, 1905, at my great-grandfather's big house in Philadelphia. A line of little children stood with their noses pressed against the glass windows of the living room. Excitement swirled like the snow outside. Proper little Quaker boys pushed and shoved to see down the road; proper little girls pushed just as hard -- and tried their best not to spoil their freshly starched dresses on the steamy windows.

Suddenly, there was a shriek of joy. Around the corner came a flicker of light.

"He's coming, Grandfather Carter!" danced Faith. "He's coming!"

Grandfather Carter -- who seemed very tall, very ancient, very Quakerly -- looked disapproving. "Thee is in error, child. Thy eyes are deceiving thee. There's nothing out there but snowflakes."

"No! Come see! Come see!" cried his grandson, Johnny, tugging him to the window.

And gradually, Grandfather Carter would allow himself to be drawn to the window, and gradually agree that, yes, just perhaps, that might be the lamplighter coming down the street through the storm, and yes, it was just possible that he would get to the gas lamp in front of the house before his lighter was blown out by the wind, but no, under no circumstances could the magic lantern be lit until it was truly dark, and the only light outside was that of the newly lit gas light, casting its flickering shadows on the snow.

The ritual -- the slow tease -- continued. The lamp of the polished Marcy Sciopticon had to be carefully lit with a broom straw. The wicks had to be turned down low so as not to crack the lens. The focus had to

be adjusted. The sheet had to be stretched tighter in a vain effort to erase the wrinkles. The wick had to be turned up. The focus had to be adjusted again. And finally, after all the waiting, there on the sheet was the giant ghostly man with the blue suit. His terrified eyes darted back and forth from child to child, hoping against hope that none of those good Quaker boys and girls would say the terrible magic word that would make his nose grow a solid foot, hit the wrinkle in the sheet, and shoot straight up in the air.

"ABRACADABRA!" the good Quaker children all screamed in unison.

And so the show went on. Grandfather Carter was a chemist and respected Philadelphia scientist. (He was once on a City Committee to Investigate Perpetual Motion.) As a result his grandchildren were instructed with a heavy dose of astronomy slides and natural history slides and microscopic creature slides. But the slide that most enchanted Johnny was a beautiful garden fountain with water that really moved. (For one period later in his life Johnny would become a landscape gardener specializing in garden pools.) And the slide that most fascinated Johnny was of a boy carving a picture of his teacher on the schoolhouse door -- which suddenly opened to reveal the teacher himself! (In later life, Johnny would become evasive when asked why this slide was especially memorable.)

It was Johnny who inherited the magic lantern and made it a part of my own upbringing in the late days of WW II. We no longer waited for the lamplighter, but the sense of ritual remained. The lens always had to be removed before a show, wrapped in a clean blanket, and put by the radiator to warm. The wick was still carefully lit with the end of a broom straw. During the show, the living room of our farmhouse in Alexandria, Virginia always reeked of kerosene -- for my generation an unusual smell that was as much a part of the magic lantern experience as the man who ate the rats. And -- because the shows were usually given when my grandfather (Grandfather Carter's son-in-law) came to visit, they took on an extra magical quality. The very nature of our language shifted, from the hard staccato of war-time Washington to Grandfather Borton's "thee and thy," -- the Quaker plain speech my parents no longer used in daily life.

When I had children of my own, my father gave the magic lantern to me. During the late sixties, while my kids were small, we packed the neighborhood children into our tiny Cambridge, Massachusetts apartment. Always, I was careful to warm the lens, and light the wick with ceremony. In spite of their TV sophistication, the kids were enthusiastic, with the occasional exception of my son, Mark Carter, who was sometimes annoyed by the invasion of neighbors and embarrassed by the hidden ham emerging in his father.

The magic lantern was such an integral and unique part of my upbringing that somehow it never occurred to me there might have been thousands of other lanterns in other families. When I gave my first public show a few months ago, a man came up to tell me about his own vivid memories of a Sunday school teacher who ended his lesson with the "ratcatcher." Suddenly, I realized that of course our family was not unique, that we were part of a nineteenth century magic lantern culture. Inquiries after a show at Mystic Seaport led me to the Wells', where I was

flabbergasted by the diversity of their magic lantern collection and the variety of Americana captured by their slides.

I'm busy now trying to get some perspective on my own family's experience -- reading back issues of this remarkable Bulletin, and studying whatever books I can find. I'm also collecting more slides. I hope to share with modern audiences the many different ways the lanternists -- the "lamplighters" of 100 years ago -- brought magic to the lives of our ancestors.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MAGIC LANTERN MATERIALS

You will recall that formation of a Bibliography Committee was announced in the January 1982 Bulletin, with Bob Woodward as chairman. Bob has labored valiantly, and the vines have begun to bear fruit. What follows is his excellent description of the form the bibliographical notes should take. I think you can see how valuable a resource this will be.

But you must remember that it is not Bob's task to develop this single-handedly. It will require the active participation and contributions not only of the other committee members but of many of the Society's members. We can't expect Bob to do all the work. Please read his notes carefully and send him at least a few items based on your personal collections of reference materials. We hope this will be a regular, continuing feature of the Bulletin.

Bob is that rare jewel, a member of an organization who offers to do something and then does it. Don't blow this opportunity. Follow his format and send your contributions to him STAT.

NOTES TOWARD A MAGIC LANTERN BIBLIOGRAPHY

By Robert H. Woodward

In the January Bulletin, Editor Leora Wood Wells announced the formation of a bibliography committee. With the dooperation of the members of the Society, the committee hopes to accomplish one of the initial aims of the Society: "to develop a master file of information on lantern and slide manufacturers, artists and distributors, and literature on magic lanterns and related optical devices" (ML Bulletin, April 1979, p. 2). Although some members have expressed a desire that this aim of the Society be met by publishing bibliographical materials (see the exchange of Stephen C. Chamberlain and Editor Wells in the April 1980 Bulletin, p. 10), the occasional bibliographical contributions to the Bulletin have been informal and unsystematic.

The committee, consisting of Richard Balzer, Jack E. Boucher, Stephen Chamberlain, and myself as chairman, requests the cooperation of all members in the compilation of an annotated bibliography covering all aspects of magic lantern history; technical data, on lantern and slide operation, maintenance, and repair; manufacturers and distributors; artists and actors; exhibitions; and role in popular culture and pre-cinema history. Sources will include books, pamphlets, periodical articles (journals, newspapers, bulletins), catalogues, brochures -- in short, any type of printed material.

Members are asked to participate by sending to the chairman of the committee as many contributions as possible. To assure bibliographical thoroughness and accuracy so that users of the compilation may locate items in libraries,

each contribution should include complete bibliographical data. For books and pamphlets, this information includes the author's name or authors' names, book title (and subtitle if any), city and state of publication, publisher's name, and date of publication (or of copyright, if no publication date is given). For periodicals, it includes the author's name or authors' names, the title of the article, the name of the periodical, the volume and number of the issue, the date of the issue (month and year, and day of month if appropriate), and inclusive page numbers. For catalogues and brochures, it includes the name of the firm and the address, the title (if any), the number (if any), and the date (if one is given).

Annotations may be of two types -- comment or synopsis. The comment is the annotator's description of the contents of the item -- the annotator's statement about it. The synopsis is a paraphrase of the contents of the item, employing quotation marks as appropriate when using the language of the original. Below are a few examples. The first is both comment and synopsis. The other two are synopses. The first and third are parts of books, the second an article from a periodical. Note that periodical citations include, after the name of the periodical, the volume number, the issue number, the date in parenthesis, and the inclusive page numbers. All numbers are given in Arabic form, their location in the citation identifying their functions. Roman numerals are used for book volumes.

Burns, Stanley A. "Photographs: The Boom in Old Pictures," in The Encyclopedia of Collectibles: Phonographs to Quilts. Alexandria, Virginia: Time-Life Books, 1979, pp. 16-31. Page 22 illustrates a carbon-arc lantern slide projector of the 1890s, with accompanying text. Glass-plate photographic transparencies were "mostly black-and-white but some colored by hand or by pioneering color processes." The slides are now inexpensive, but the projectors are very expensive.

Chamberlain, Stephen C. "Travelers' Treasure Troves: The Barnes Cinema Store and the Barnes Museum." ML Bulletin, 2, 1 (April 1980), 1-3. The Barnes Cinema Store, in London's King's Road, is "packed with magic lanterns, phenakistiscopes, zoetropes, flip-card devices, books, pamphlets. . . ." The Barnes Museum of Cinematography in St. Ives, Cornwall, "houses an unbelievable concentration of materials relating to the magic lantern," as well as many 18th-Century camera obscuras, exhibits devoted to anamorphic images and other optical devices, books by Kircher, Zahn, and Muybridge, and early cinema material. "In short, it is one of the finest collections in existence."

Dyer, Frank Lewis, and Thomas Commerford Martin. Edison: His Life and Inventions. 2 vols. New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1910. Edison's Kinetoscope used a peep-hole to exhibit a positive print directly to the eye. In 1895, however, "the films were applied to modified forms of magic lanterns, by which images are projected upon a screen" (II, 541).

The name of the contributor of each item will appear in parenthesis after the annotation unless anonymity is requested. A headnote at the beginning of each installment of the bibliography will indicate which of the contributors are willing to share the items they have annotated by lending them, photocopying them, or answering questions related to them.

Contributions will appear in the Bulletin as space permits. Please send your items to me at 494 Cheyenne Lane, San Jose, CA 95123. I will prepare the contributions for the editor and will confer with other members of the committee as necessary.

It is the hope of the committee that this bibliography will eventually be worthy of separate publication as a valuable and significant contribution to the history of the magic lantern.

LANTERN SLIDES OF THE WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION

By Betty Anderson

When I was working in an antique shop, I bought about 400 lantern slides without knowing a thing about them. I simply felt they would be lost, as no one wanted them, and I thought they should be preserved. They were so mixed up it took me weeks to assemble them in groups. It was a lot of fun, running to the library and making discoveries about them.

I noted one time that Bud Kannenberg was buying Indian and Eskimo slides and was able to make a deal with him. One slide I couldn't figure at all. The caption read, "Esquimaux Village" -- buy why, I wondered, would there be a group of men sitting to one side, dressed in traditional summer clothes complete with boater straw hats? I sent the slide anyway, and it seemed acceptable to Bud.

Now here's the rest of the story: my next door neighbor has two lovely books, souvenirs of the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. I couldn't believe my eyes when that very same picture popped out at me -- and so the riddle was solved. The plates were taken by a Government photographer and used by special arrangement. The following text appears under the picture:

> The Esquimaux Village. In the fall of 1892 there arrived at Chicago a colony of Esquimaux taken from a point as far south in Labrador as Esquimaux could be found, but southern as they might be in Labrador, it was feared they would do ill in Chicago where great heats prevail in July. Hence a whole winter was allowed to them for acclimatization. In order to give them a supposed advantage, the colonists were admitted to Jackson Park proper, where they were allowed to build a stockade and charge admissions fees. No sooner did summer appear than dissensions arose. The fur coats were thrown aside, whereas the public desired to see them in their customary dress of the North. Our picture shows the nearly deserted settlement as it appeared after a revolt. They are playing a game with "Black Snake" whips. The meager attendance of visitors is representative of the small patronage that rewarded the exhibition.

So, Bud Kannenberg, it you read this, you will know the story of the slide you bought. I hope it adds rather than detracts from your enjoyment of your purchase. The original photographs are preserved in the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

The books are called The World's Fair Art Series, published by N.D. Thompson Publishing Company, St. Louis, MO, 1893. Perhaps I can be of help to other members who have World's Fair slides.

Esquimaux in their Winter Garb at the World's Fair. The Youth's Companion, 1893.

HARRY THE WHISTLE

By James P. Flanagan

My business of buying electronic parts had brought me to Ruislip, a lovely English village about a mile south of the center of London. Our negotiations were completed on Friday morning and as was my custom, I had reservations to fly back to the States on Sunday evening. Having two days "on the town" does not sound like very much, but when the town in question is London, it is something very special. I had visited Piccadilly Square, Westminster Abbey, The Towers and the Science Museum on previous trips. Now this Saturday morning I left my hotel at 8:00 a.m. and walked a block to catch the underground railway for Notting Hill Station, the English flea market where I just knew I would find treasure in the form of magic lantern materials.

On leaving the railway car an hour later, I found that everyone was heading in the same direction following the signs for the Portobello Market. A few minutes later I found myself weaving down the center of Portobello road where no motor car can get through on Saturday mornings, the only day the market is open. For six or seven blocks the street is lined with stands and carts selling just about every kind of merchandise in the world. In addition to the stalls, every store front was open to specialize in brass goods, silver, china, clothing, umbrellas and gadgets. The most unusual stores were not stores at all -- they were very large rooms containing a hundred or more stalls and tables selling whatever, including antiques. My first purchase was a burlap shopping bag inscribed in large letters: "PUBLIC BEWARE OF SWINDLERS, TRICKSTERS, PICKPOCKETS, KNAVES, THIEVES, FAGGOTS AND GRASPING DOUBLE DEALERS".

Having secured my wallet and realizing I could not possibly examine everything I came across, I started to look for camera equipment. Seeing

a second-hand box camera, I asked the stall keeper if he had any magic lanterns or slides. The merchant turned out to be a most jovial chap and asked me if I knew a local lanternist named Doug Lear. When I said I did, he introduced himself as: "Harry the Whistle" and asked to be remembered to Doug. I was then directed to a nearby stall specializing in cameras.

I soon found myself in a camera shop, said: "Harry the Whistle sent me," and was shown a part of a mechanism for a magic lantern. I was not interested but was directed to a nearby corner where the shopkeeper's son was selling cameras. After weaving through the crowds for another block, (it seemed everyone in London was there), I found a long table full of photographic equipment and a dealer explaining the value of an old folding camera. I waited several minutes to get the attention of the dealer, only to be disappointed to learn that while he had a collection of magic lantern material, "I usually do not carry it all down here -- too much of a bother." I enquired where he lived and ascertained that while it was out of town, it was on the railway line. "Look," I explained, "I'll be flying back tomorrow night. Is there any chance of seeing your material tomorrow morning?"

The dealer met me at the station the next morning, drove me to his home and I enjoyed a wonderful breakfast with him and his wife. Then we looked at his lanterns which, while not many in number, were most interesting to examine. Then to my surprise, he brought out not only splendid lever and slipping slides, but a rare set of Carpenter and Westley rackwork Astronomical sliders. That evening as I flew back to the States, I realized that all of my spare cash was gone. But then, how often would I have the opportunity of obtaining a museum set of sliders, or meet someone named "Harry the Whistle?"

ADVICE TO A WOULD-BE LECTURER

By David S. Brooke

In this glorious era of the "Renaissance of the Lantern," many of the members of our Society must be seriously considering the occupation of lecturing. In so doing, they have the advantage of novelty; to invert an observation of the 1890's: "What child of five, having experienced the delights of the mechanical slide, can be content with the mere action of moving pictures?" These things have been with us for too long, and there is a very real possibility that television and the cinema are on the way out, and that lanterns are on the way in.

The audiences awaiting this new generation of lecturers, are as yet unfamiliar with the lantern and its tricks. They can sigh once more at dissolving views, cheer at artificial fireworks and applaud the practical jokes of the slipping slide. Indeed, the startled lecturers may find themselves occasionally congratulated on their avant-gardeism by university students and members of the artistic community.

Even though we can expect such appreciative audiences, we would do well to consider those who lectured a hundred years ago, and the suggestions they had to offer. How a lanternist behaves in the dark when hit by a pea, and where one should not show nude statuary (within 15 miles of Boston), might today be considered archaic pieces of advice, but there is a good deal of sound common sense for lecturers in the pages of the Optical

Magic Lantern Journal and the introductions to various manuals on the lantern. Take, for example, Thomas Byford's Hints to Would-Be Village Lecturers (OMLJ, XI):

> Village folk do not like long lectures; let them be short and to the point . . . Don't talk as if you have a plum in your mouth; speak slowly and deliberately in a natural tone of voice, which will penetrate to every corner of the room . . .
>
> Never gas or strut about a village as if you were somebody in particular. Nothing lowers a person more speedily in the rustic mind than vulgar airs. Strange as it may appear, the dwellers in our villages are excellent judges of human nature, and will weigh a person up much quicker than a townsman.

My main purpose in these notes, however, is to share with you the following letter which my namesake, Bombastes Triple, wrote to a friend who was considering taking up the business of lecturing in the 1890's. While some of B.T.'s advice may seem a trifle out of date, (most of you do not have to hire slides or worry about your gas cylinders), much of it is to the point even now. In the words of Thomas Byford, "The secret of success lies in the fact of sending people away laughing."

> My dear Blothrough,
>
> At length I can find time to answer your letter of last week, in which you seek some advice concerning the feasibility of your attempting to give some lantern lectures during the coming winter. . . First and foremost, you want my opinion as to whether anyone, like yourself for instance, possessed of ordinary every-day attainments and abilities, is capable of becoming a lecturer. My answer to this is, "Yes!" but I hasten to qualify this assertion by reminding you that there are at least three kinds of lecturers, -- the really good, the passable, and the indescribably bad.
>
> As far as my experience goes, the vast majority of amateur lecturers belong to the last-mentioned set, and it is only a few here and there who may claim to be placed in the second class. . . It is a strange thing that some men, who can hardly be blind to their inability to either educate or entertain their own particular circle of friends and relations, should believe themselves capable of instructing or amusing the public at large.
>
> Wherefore, my dear Blothrough, you certainly must not take it for granted that, just because your tastes and ambition lead you in that direction, you are bound to have the makings of a lecturer in you and that you only require a cheap biunial and 60 slides in order to make yourself a world-wide reputation . . . To begin with, you are the right age, that is to say, not young enough to know everything, nor yet too old to learn . . . Another thing in your favor is that you have served a long apprenticeship as operator, and have heard

many lecturers, and have probably noted their respective strong points or deficiencies. A bald head and an expansive shirt front (two very desirable attributes), time and tailors will provide for you. . . Here, then, is my prescription for the would-be lecturer -- work, hard work! and lots of it.

In your letter you lament the fact that, although you have a fairly intimate acquaintance with the elements of two or three sciences, you have not made a special study of any particular one, and therefore do not consider yourself fitted to lecture on a scientific or educational subject . . . It is notorious that most specialists, with a few notable exceptions, generally fail as popular lecturers on their own subjects. Take the case of Professor Drybones, the eminent geologist. When lecturing he is bound down to absolute exactness in every detail, he is cramped and fettered by the obligation of leaving nothing unsaid because it happens to be uninteresting or technical. You and I can speak in bold but sufficiently accurate generalities; we can take sweeping views and make broad summaries of our subject. . . You and I, my dear Blothrough, cannot read papers before learned societies as the professor can, but we will show our audiences a slide of Niagara Falls on the screen, and tell them the yarn of the Irishman who "spoke Chinese," and I daresay we shall be forgiven.

Now for a few practical hints. Select your subject as soon as possible, and then begin to get your slides together. Remember, you must own, for the time being, at all events, the set of slides which you intend using in your lecture. . . probably you proposed to hire them from the dealers in the usual way . . . -- the very tightest box a man can find himself in is to be announced to lecture, say, on "Skylarks in Town," and then, a couple of hours before the doors open, to receive from the dealers a set of slides accompanied with a polite intimation that "Skylarks, etc., is out, and so we have sent the story of 'Bill the Converted Plumber.'" Please understand that I do not wish, by my last remarks, to imply that the dealers are always at fault, or that any plumber (of the kind I have come into contact with), could possibly have been converted. . . Write out the whole, from beginning to end, and then, with a ruthless pencil cut it down, contract, condense and shorten it, until its delivery takes a sharp 75 minutes. Next learn it off by heart, or if not actually off by heart, at all events, read and re-read it until you are perfectly familiar with the run of the words.

In conclusion, let me impress upon you two things, which, for my part, I consider the two most important factors of success. First of all, be in time!. . . Leave nothing to chance, see that everything is in its place, run the slides through the lantern, gauge the contents of the gas cylinders, see that you have sufficient light for your notes. . .

The other, and more important one is, be funny! Never mind the subject of your lecture, let it be science, temperance, or what you will, still, you must be amusing. Remember that, although your audience may come for instruction, the object most prominent in the minds of the majority of them is amusement. You will not find them too critical concerning the actual merits of your wit and humor; give them jokes in plenty, and I will guarantee the kindly reception of them. If you cannot elaborate new ones, borrow old ones, and mind you have an impromptu ready for every incident or hitch that may occur, and let these be the most carefully prepared parts of your lecture. . . Remember that your audience has not assembled to hear how much you know about some particular subject; in fact, you will soon find out that many persons resent having it pointed out to them how superior your intellect is to theirs. If you are forced to introduce uninteresting matter into your lecture, remember that laughter will cover a multitude of dry facts, and so begin with a jest, end with a joke, and see that there are plenty of smart sayings in the middle . . . You want to give a decent lecture, well, begin early, choose a sensible subject, i.e., one which will interest your audience as well as yourself; work hard, rehearse often, be in time, and be humorous. If you cannot fulfill each of these conditions, then take my advice and give up the idea of lecturing, and remain as you are, a good amateur operator.

Faithfully yours,

Bombastes Triple

FOCUSING ON THE PAST: A SHOW BY JOE AND ALICE KOCH

By Robert H. Woodward

The students in the upper-division American Studies Program course in American Popular Culture at San Jose State University knew nothing about the history and importance of magic lanterns until the evening of February 18, 1982, when Joe and Alice Koch presented them with an hour-long show that took them from the Columbia River log rafts of the late 19th Century to the motion picture coming attractions of the 1930s.

Using a 1906 McIntosh projector housing a 400-watt lamp in a 1904 screw-base, and equipped with a cooling fan Joe installed himself, Joe ran the gamut of slide types -- static slides, single slippers, double slippers, lever slides, chromatropes, animated slides. He worked into his presentation many of the familiar slide-show subjects -- historic, patriotic, comic, educational, advertising -- with several slides on single subjects such as trains, ships, and the sugar industry. He included one complete story, "The Potato Roasters," a 35-slide set made in England about 1890, as well as a complete set of the Ford line of vehicles in 1939. The young members of the audience were amazed that a new touring car that year cost only $395 and that a club coupe (an Olds, not a Ford) was so named because it had a compartment behind the seat for a bag of golf clubs.

Joe knows his slides well. Curious by nature and a history buff by choice, he has researched the background of his slides and has looked at each one carefully. He points out details one might otherwise miss ("Did you notice the name of the grocery store selling the sugar--T. Sweet?")

This was the 139th show Joe and Alice have presented. They obviously love what they are doing, and the audience was entranced. After the show, many members of the class came to the projection table to ask questions and inspect the slides and lantern. Steve Triebes, a fourteen-year-old eight-grader who learned about the show and attended because of his interest in history and antiques, plans to present a report on magic lanterns to his class. He is even planning to look for slides and a projector for himself. With enthusiasts like Joe and Alice spreading the word, and the light, magic lantern lore will stay alive and well into the years to come.

KOCH'S KORNER: THE CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

National Referral Inventory. The National Referral Center of the Library of Congress was established to foster the interchange of information in the physical, biological, engineering and social sciences, and the humanities and the many areas related to them. At their request, we have sent information about the ML Society so we can be registered as an information resource to serve American specialists. The inventory, which now includes more than 12,000 information resources, is made up of organizations having specialized knowledge they are willing to share with others.

Request for Volunteers. California members please note. The San Diego Historical Society has issued a call for volunteers to help them clean, sort, identify and catalogue their collection of 3½ x 4" photographic lantern slides. Dating from about 1895 to the 1920's, these slides are mostly of San Diego subjects such as street, harbor and park scenes, buildings, people and events. Some are hand tinted; others in natural color or black and white. Some have special effects added, such as one sledding scene on which tiny dots have been painted to simulate falling snow.

Meeting of Northwest Group. Because of a conflict of dates with the NW Antique Camera Club, attendance at the April 25 meeting was smaller than usual, but it was an enjoyable meeting for those who were able to be there. Joe Koch unveiled the new membership application form which includes a request for a 250 word autobiography about applicants and their specific magic lantern-related interests.

Several members reported on shows they had given:

Louis Moran--Bellevue Sunrisers Kiwanis Club
James Parker--Church group in North Bend, Oregon
Bud Kannenberg--80 people in Port Townsend, Washington
Bob Bishop--Puget Sound Camera Club and
Opening of Seattle Folklife Festival
Joe and Alice Koch--San Jose State College
Kent Senior Center
Clallam County Historical Museum, Port Angeles, Washington

Climax of the meeting was Louis Moran's showing of slides of old aircraft, projected on John Potter's 1907 Bausch & Lomb large lens lantern. Louis,

a retired Air Force pilot, is an aviation buff.

Comments from Australia. Allan Osborne, our member in Victoria, Australia, has offered several suggestions for consideration of the membership:

1. More active interchange of correspondence. Despite ads in both the British and American journals and more than 70 letters written since late 1980, Allan says he has been unable to establish continuing correspondence with other members. He finds this very disappointing, since his principal purpose in joining was to locate "kindred souls" with whom to share enjoyment of his interests in pre-cinema and early cinema items.

2. More articles in the Bulletin based on presentations at the National Convention last August, since so many members were unable to attend. Both Leora and I had hoped this would be possible, but requests to the presenters for copies of their remarks have gone unanswered and Ed Lennert reports the tapes are of too poor quality to be usable without technical enhancement that he has not had time to provide.

3. More articles in the Bulletin about the magic lantern collections of various museums, since many members live too far from the museums to visit them. Allan found the several articles on the Barnes museum particularly interesting. Although he did not mention it, the October 1981 issue of the Bulletin carried a long article on "Magic Lanterns in British Museums." Please, will any of you who live in or visit cities which have museums with M.L. displays write them up for us?

4. Inclusion of "good print-quality photos" in the Bulletin. Since this is not feasible with our extremely limited financial resources, Allan suggests that we publish a magazine every six months "on a commercial basis." I'm afraid a quick look at the mortality rate even of long-established magazines and newspapers in the present economy would demonstrate the impossibility of doing this, particularly since the market for the product would be approximately 65-70 people. Allan also suggests that the members be asked whether they would be willing to pay higher annual dues to pay for a more sophisticated form of production. Any comments?

5. Inclusion of prices of books and catalogues listed in the Bulletin which members may wish to purchase. Allan's thought is that this would save unnecessary letter writing. We have avoided this because in the present economy, prices change very rapidly and a new printing of a book or catalogue is often priced several dollars higher than its original price.

6. Annual Mail Auction in which all members could list items they wish to dispose of. Several of our members have, of course, prepared catalogues of their own to make their surplus items available. As they can tell you, this is a massive amount of work. Organizing a Society-wide auction would be no easy job, but the idea is a good one if anyone wishes to do it. I'll be glad to hear from any volunteers. Each contributor to the catalogue would, of course, have to support the costs of including and mailing his listings, and would have to handle negotiations with potential buyers which resulted from the listings, as well as shipment and insurance of the purchased items.

Allan reports that he has had good luck adding to his collection this year. Recent acquisitions have included a zograscope, a zoetrope, a kinetoscope, limelight burners and numerous other items. He would enjoy sharing information about his new treasures with anyone who cares to write to him at 435 Bay Street, Port Melbourne 3207, Victoria, Australia.

Membership Update. Several new members (listed elsewhere) have joined the Society, replacing almost all of those lost by attrition at renewal time. It looks like we may be getting two new auxiliary members: John and Betty Potter are expecting twins.

One of our new members, a collector and antiques broker in Philadelphia, says he considers magic lanterns and slides "the sleepers of the antique world." If so, we should be able to recruit lots of new members. This isn't as difficult as you might think. Leora picked up a potential new member recently by simply telling someone who was examining a slide in an antique shop about the existence of the Society. Since the lady had bought her first magic lantern only a few minutes before and knew nothing at all about lanterns, she was delighted to know that a source of information existed.

Incidentally, two of our new members have made virtually the same comment: "For years, I thought I was the only collector in the world." I wonder how many of the rest of us harbored that same impression?

NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE: THE EDITOR'S SCRAPBOOK

Bulletin Schedule. To all of you who have been waiting patiently -- or impatiently -- for the "April" Bulletin, my apologies. As I've mentioned before, because of the nature of my job, I have an unpredictable and uncontrollable work schedule. Time carefully set aside for volunteer m.l. activity has an unfortunate way of getting crowded out by inflexible deadlines imposed by my work.

It therefore seems sensible to change the publication dates of the Bulletin from April, July, October and January to Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. There will still be four issues per year, so this change really does nothing except to bring theory and reality a bit closer together.

Help Wanted. Many of you have been kind enough to write or phone to comment on the quality of our Bulletin. In this, of course, the credit is only partly mine; much of it is due those members who contribute items and articles of richly varied interest. Some of you have also said that with our membership so scattered and our meetings few and far between, the Bulletin is the cement that holds the organization together. I'm afraid this mortar may soon crumble. I'm having serious doubts about my ability to continue as sole Editor, since I foresee no let up in my work load for at least another year or year and a half.

Have any of you solutions to suggest? Are there aspiring editors in the wings to take on part of the job? What would you think of a rotating editorship, with four editors, each responsible for one issue per year? Or two editors, each responsible for two issues? Or guest editors, on call to pitch in and put an issue to bed when I am unable to do so?

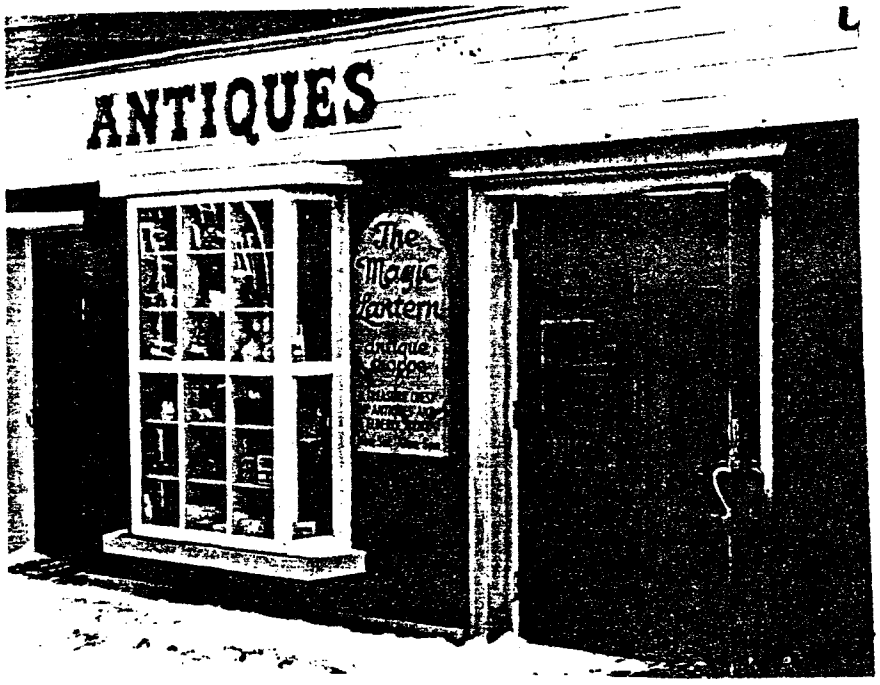
Please let me know your thoughts on this. I am concerned about asking you to wait for your Bulletins until I can find time to put them together, and feel that in fairness to our loyal membership, some change must be made.

Thank You Note. If you look carefully at this Bulletin, I believe you will find it contains contributions from more of our members than any previous issue. Although I haven't been able to thank each contributor individually, I greatly appreciate the material they have sent. The diverse perspectives add enormously to the interest of the Bulletin.

More, Please! Keep the articles coming on any and all subjects. Nothing would make me happier than having a stockpile of articles, personal experience items and short notes on which to draw.

Introducing Helen Hilton. Have you wondered who has been doing such a splendid typing job on our Bulletin? It is Helen Hilton of Auburn, Washington. Helen is head of Hilton & Associates, a secretarial, bookkeeping, tax preparation and manuscript editing firm. Although she has several typists on her "on-call" list, Helen says she prefers to do the ML Bulletin herself because she finds it so interesting. In fact, she paid us the supreme compliment: she said she sometimes finds she has gotten so absorbed in the articles that she finds she has stopped typing. Helen's interest in magic lanterns grew out of acquaintance with Joe and Alice Koch and a show they gave about five years ago. We are lucky to have found someone who enjoys this task and does it so well.

Montpelier Magic. One of our many business trips since the last Bulletin found my husband and me with a little free time before we had to catch our plane in Burlington. So naturally, we looked in our trusty guide to Antiquing in Vermont and found to our delight that there is a "Magic Lantern Antique Shop" in Montpelier. We found a rich hoard of country store artifacts for a museum we are creating, but would you believe NOT A SINGLE MAGIC LANTERN? We've seen many in shops all over Maryland, Virginia Pennsylvania, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine within the past few months, but nary a one in that particular spot.



The lanterns we have seen, incidentally, have ranged from a very nice, complete, square Russian Iron EP for $30 to identical ones at asking prices up to several hundred dollars. We've seen everything from incredible junk--rusty, incomplete and totally nonfunctional lanterns--for $95-125, to the superb, unusual specimens in the shop of Henry and Jane Schlosser in Strasburg, Pennsylvania. The double moral to this story is:

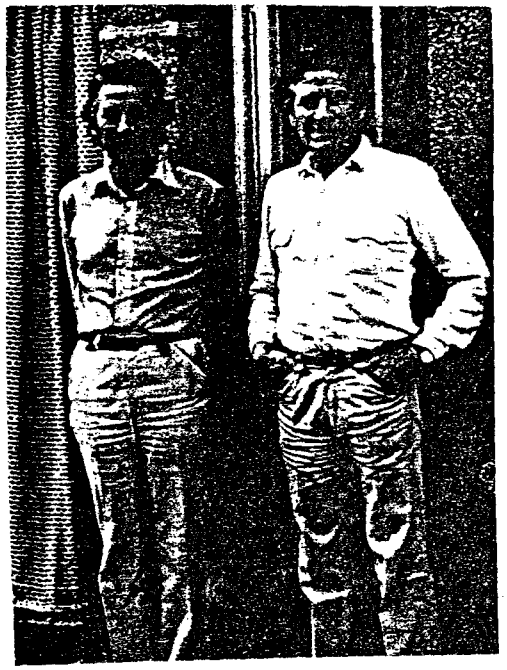
(a) don't buy inferior lanterns. There are plenty of good ones around.

(b) don't spend big bucks for common lanterns; save the big bucks for ones you really can't live without.

Malaysian Magic. Don Spiegel somehow unearthed the information that a New York firm called Ogilvy & Mather, Inc. has a Malaysian subsidiary called "Magic Lantern." His curiosity piqued by this, Don wrote the company for information and got back the following reply:

> One thing about being very large and multi-national, you begin to lose track of the companies that make up the whole, so I was surprised to note we had a Malaysian company called "Magic Lantern."
>
> Many years ago our founder, David Ogilvy, prepared a slide presentation, which he called "Magic Lantern." We now have a number of these "Magic Lanterns" on various subjects. This information is used all over the world as a guide for our creative and account people.
>
> You are absolutely right that the name of our presentations and the Malaysian company does come from the turn-of-the century magic lantern projectors.

Introducing the Barnes Brothers. As all readers of the Bulletin are abundantly aware, the Barnes twins are the proprietors of the Barnes Museum of Cinematography, which houses ne of the world's finest collections of magic lanterns. After all the discussion of their look-alike qualities, we thought you'd like a look at them, even if a xerox of a xerox of a print of a slide doesn't do them justice.



The resemblance is actually more startling than it appears in the picture, taken last August in St. Ives, Cornwall. Even though we had been talking with John for several hours, off and on, before Bill appeared, we still had to resort to remembering which one was wearing which shirt. Among other characteristics they share is an enormously hospitable attitude toward visiting m.l. buffs. I hope many of you will have the pleasure of meeting them as we did.

The Phantasmagoria Strikes Again. Terry Borton has supplied an hilarious article that appeared in the New York Times on May 5. James Turrell, a west coast artist, put together a show "making light inhabit space so it feels materially present." It seems that he succeeded too well. So dramatic was the effect that two good ladies are suing the Whitney Museum and the artist for damages. One claims she became so disoriented that she was iolently precipitated to the floor" of the museum and broke her arm. The other lady claims she suffered permanent injuries when she fell after stepping back against what she thought was a solid wall but which was only an illusion.

Lawyers were reported to be scratching their heads and perusing their law books in search of precedents. Maybe they aren't looking back far enough. Etienne Robertson could surely have shown them a thing or two about the effects of illusion on audiences!

Serendipity. A box of Bickmore's Gall Salve for animals that we bought for a museum contained a serendipity--a flyer offering to send a "Free Slide for Moving Picture Machine" with the local dealer's name inserted and ready for use in his local theater. Some of us are old enough to remember when the highly colored advertising slides of local merchants shared the time between feature films with song slides. The illustration on the flyer shows the focusing unit of a magic lantern and the projected images of a horse and a cow.

Eureka! In a recent issue of a print catalogue, we happened upon identification of one of our dissolving sets. "Looking In" shows a benign old gentleman with glasses "looking into" the news in the Naval and Military Gazette. The other shows a man with brow furrowed in thought and chin supported by his hand. He is "looking out" of a window--with a pistol in his right hand. What's the story? Was the news so bad he is contemplating suicide? Or does he plan to take a pop at intruders? In any case, we learned that these paintings were the work of Henry Perle Parker. Engraved by W.O. Geller, they were published in 1836 and 1837 by Ackerman and Co., London. Later, Currier and Ives issued their own versions of these prints--and, as noted, they were also turned into mahogany framed lantern slides.

This information provides many clues which we could follow up if time permitted and we wanted to develop a more complete interpretation of these slides. For example, it would be easy to determine what naval and military engagements involving the British occurred around 1837. The moral is: watch for clues in unexpected places. You may learn a lot about the dates of your slides and what historical or fictional events they represent.

Brideshead Revisited. Those of you who watched this series on television may have seen the episode (February 15 in our area) which featured a 1924 magic lantern show. In it, Mr. Samgrass, faithful and utterly boring friend of the Marchmain family, ran true to form by boring everyone to distraction with slides of his trip to Egypt and Constantinople. He used a large, black electric lantern with very large slides. They appeared to be about 4 x 5" rather than the more common 3¼ x 4" size. His commentary was a splendid caricature of what so often ails personal travel shows: "There I am," said Mr. Samgrass, "with our cook."

Sharing the Goodies. Larry Rakow reports that his recent mailing to make surplus m.l. items available to the members was extremely successful and that nearly 150 of the 173 items he listed were sold within the first week. That must mean that we have quite a few members who are gloating over new treasures they obtained.

Now I see that John Craig has issued a mailing. We recognized quite a few favorites from our own collection (and I must confess are glad we purchased them 10-20 years ago at throw-away prices!)

We understand another member may soon decide to send out a mailing, but we won't tell you who. But if the list materializes, it will be choice!

Small World Department. A few months ago a friend who is curator of Mystic Seaport Museum in Connecticut rang us up to say he had just seen a most interesting magic lantern show presented at a meeting of a local historical society. He said he had told the owner of the lantern about us and suggested that he visit us and see our collection when in Washington for a conference the following week. Thus, we met Dr. Terry Borton, whose delightful article about his Quaker great-grandfather's lantern appears in this issue.

Terry, who is Editor of The Weekly Reader so familiar to most of our kids, was like a kid in a candy shop on the evening he visited us because, he said, it had never really occurred to him that there might be other people who

had magic lanterns, and he had never dreamed of the infinite variety of types of lanterns and slides that exist. By the time the evening was over, the Society had a new member, we had a new friend, and Terry had a rapidly expanding interest in the whole subject of magic lanterns.

Somehow, during the course of the evening, he mentioned a cabin in the New Jersey woods whose occupancy he shares on a rotating basis with several relatives. It began to sound awfully familiar, as my husband and I got flashbacks to a wonderful weekend spent there with friends several years ago. Turned out Terry is a cousin of one of our closest associates, so we are planning a family reunion of sorts on his next visit.

What's In A Name? Well, a lot of one's sense of personal identity, for one thing. Some of you seem to be confused by my name. I get mail addressed to Leora Wood Wells, Leora Woodwells, Leora Wood-Wells, Leora Wells Wood, and Mr. and Mrs. Willeroy Wood-Wells. The salutations on my letters range from Dear Leora to Dear (Any of the Above) and Dear Mrs. Woods (now where did they get that one!)

Let's get it straight. Before I was married, my name was Leora Wood. I married Willeroy Wells. Both personally and professionally I continued to use my maiden name along with my married name -- but in unhyphenated form. This makes me neither Mrs. Wood-Wells nor Mrs. Wood but simply Mrs. Wells. And it sure doesn't make my husband Mr. Wood-Wells.

So, just for the record: call me Leora or Lee or Mrs. Wells, and address the envelopes to Leora Wood Wells or to Mr. and Mrs. Willeroy Wells. But please -- no more fancy variations!!

(And, by the way, my apologies to one of our members whom I addressed by the wrong name in a May 4 letter written at 3:00 a.m. when I was trying to get ready to leave on a prolonged business trip! I really do know the difference between Joes and Jims, but at that hour, things do get snarled up!)

BOOKS OLD AND NEW

Philosophy in Sport Made Science in Earnest. Being an Attempt to Illustrate the First Principles of Natural Philosophy by the Aid of Popular Toys and Sports, by John Ayrton Paris, 2 vol., Philadelphia, 1828 first American edition. Copperplate illustrations. The 1982 Winter Catalogue of Bookseller Irene Rouse listed this important early work at $60. I don't know whether it is still available. If interested, contact Mrs. Rouse directly at 905 Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. The last time I was in her shop, Mrs. Rouse also had two sets of lantern lecturer John Stoddard's books.

ML ARTICLE

The March 1982 issue of Smithsonian magazine carries an informative cover story on song slides entitled "Romance and Joy, Tears and Heartache, and All for a Nickel." The article is by the well-known song slide expert John Ripley. Our own Nancy Bergh, who did a lot of the research for the piece, is credited on page 80.

The 18 full color illustrations add vitality to the story. Although the article is primarily about the use of live model song slides in nickelodean

theaters shortly after the turn of the century, it will bring back the Good Old Days to any of us old enough to remember when sing-alongs were part of every outing to a movie theater.

John and Nancy have discovered that in the early days of the movies, many actors picked up spare cash by posing for song slides. Silent screen star Norma Talmadge got her start that way at the age of 14. Frances X. Bushman, Anna Q. Nilsson and Mabel Normand were others who followed the same route. Ripley's explanation of how the special effects backgrounds for the live actors were created is one of the most interesting parts of the article.

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INTERNATIONAL MAGIC LANTERN CONVENTION 1983 M.L. Society of G.B.

Plans are now advancing for the Convention to be held in Central London at the Architectural Association during April next year. Further details will be announced later.

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Q&A: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT MAGIC LANTERNS

Q: An earlier issue of the Bulletin contained Linda Kowall's query about the Lubin Company, an early film producer and maker of illustrated song slides. Although our informant, Nancy Bergh, says she thinks Ms. Kowall already has all the information she can supply, it is so interesting that we give it here for the benefit of other members. Nancy drew the material she supplied from two articles by John Ripley.

A: One of Sig Lubin's most famous song slide sets was "In the Baggage Coach Ahead." This came out in 1896, illustrating a tear-jerking ballad that tells of a young father traveling on a train with his small child whose crying disturbs the other passengers. They express varying degrees of irritation until one asks, "Where is its mother? Go take it to her." Sadly the young man responds, "I wish I could, but she's dead in the coach ahead."

This remarkable set of slides is interesting for a number of reasons. Its lachrymose mood is very characteristic of the period. The words and music were written by Gussie L. Davis, a Pullman porter, who claimed the song was based on an actual event he had witnessed. The sense of reality was further enhanced by the settings. Lubin got permission to use an authentic sleeping car and baggage coach of the Baltimore and Ohio's elegant "Pullman Palace" train for his interior and exterior shots. And finally, the identity of the young man who played the bereaved husband and father emerged from the shadows of history more than a half century later when the slides were shown on an educational television program. Dr. Vera Dreiser of New York City -- niece of author Theodore Dreiser and his brother, song writer Paul Dreiser -- recognized the young man as her father, actor Ed Dreiser.

Editor's Note: Nancy knows of, but does not have, two other Lubin song slide sets: "He is Sleeping in a Lonely Southern Grave," and "In the City of Sighs and Tears" (1902). Anyone else have Lubin material? Ms. Kowall would like to know about posters, postcards, advertising stills and other

items as well as slides.

Q: Has anyone in the Society run across any slides of the Indian leaders who attended the "Last Great Indian Council" during the Administration of President William Howard Taft? This historic event was photographed by slidemaker John D. Scott, who was a member of the second Rodman Wanamaker expedition under the direction of Joseph K. Dixon. Scott's photographs were used in Dixon's book, The Vanishing Race, and I understand the slides made from them were used in the Wanamaker lectures for several years. Scott was with the firm of Scott and Van Altena. If you have any photographic slides of Indians, will you check them with my request in mind, please?

Nancy Bergh

A: How about it, members? Any of you have any of these slides? Let's give Nancy some help if we can.

Q: Is anyone in the Society proficient in Latin translations? I have acquired microfilm copies of Kircher's 1646 and 1671 manuscripts of Ars Magna et Umbrae, but I have long since lost my ability to translate Latin, so I can only "look at the drawings." They are really breathtaking. It would be a real contribution to be able to publish several pages from the material on lanterns in the ML Bulletin if only we had a Latin scholar in the Society.

James P. Flanagan

A: Alas, I am also unable to translate Latin, and I doubt my son can do so any more either. Anyone able to cast light into the shadows for the benefit of Jim and the Society?

Q: I started collecting slides quite by accident after discovering three collections in various buildings I was renovating. My collection is mostly European, probably German, and of high quality. I would like to know:

1) What process was used in creating the mahogany framed colored slides?
2) Why are the American-made slides so inferior to those made in Germany and elsewhere in Europe?
3) Who were the master slide makers?
4) What kind of market is there for projectors and what is their value?

I would like to hear from other collectors.

Michael Verker (See "New Members" list for address)

A: Some of the questions you have asked have been answered in earlier issues of the Bulletin. Others can best be answered through direct contact with members of the Society. The membership list will give you an idea of the major interests and areas of knowledge of the members.

As for value, as we have said so often, this depends upon where you live and can best be gauged by attending the large antique shows attracting several hundred dealers. Also, Renninger's Antique Markets in Adamstown and Kutztown, PA usually have quite a few lanterns and slides, especially on their Extravaganza weekends. See Antique Digest for dates. Also visit Henry and Jane Schlosser at Black Angus Antique Market, Adamstown, PA.

One of our members, Ed Lennert, has assembled a great deal of information on current asking prices, but has apparently not yet had time to get this in shape to share with the members. Perhaps an offer to help with this task might benefit both of you and the membership at large.

Q: Is there a practical way to duplicate m.l. slides in color or black and white on paper or glass?

Michael Verker

A: It is easy enough to make color transparencies or paper prints of them. Simply place the slide in the window with good, even sunlight behind it, and shoot with the appropriate film. Don't leave the slides exposed to sunlight for any great length of time, however; they will crackle and the colors will fade.

Another member has suggested that slides can also be copied on copying machines but warns he does not know whether the brief exposure to the very intense light of the machine harms the slides.

Q: I plan to donate a "Regalia" lantern to the Photographic Museum of the University of Texas at Austin, and I need as much information as possible about it. The lantern was made in Cincinnati, Ohio, and has three filter drops -- black, red and yellow -- located between the objective and the condensers. The light chamber and lens assemblies are metal, the rest is wood. Can anyone give me additional details about this lantern?

Col. Mark T. Muller
4303 Woodway Drive
Austin, Texas 78731

A: This is only a hunch, but worth pursuing, I think. Many lanterns and slide sets were made in Ohio specifically for use in the rituals of fraternal organizations such as the Knights of Pythias, the Masons, etc. The name "Regalia" suggests that your lantern may be one made for this purpose. See January 1980 ML Bulletin, p. 5 for item on Pettibone Manufacturing Company of Cincinnati. You might write the reference librarian of the Cincinnati Public Library for information about this company and other manufacturers and distributors of optical and/or lodge goods. Let us know what you find out.

BUY/SELL/TRADE

Sell. I wish to dispose of a 1916 Motiograph Projector. Please contact me for description and price information.

Bob Anderson
Representative in the Legislature
Minnesota House of Representatives
399A State Office Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Buy. I wish to purchase magic lantern limelight mechanism and/or the lime cylinders used with it. Originals preferred; reproductions acceptable.

M. Lindsay-Lambert
324-B Somerset Street West
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 0J9 Canada

Buy/Sell. I am buying slides on nautical and military subjects, temperance, "morality," anything with slaves or blacks, pre-Victorian rounds and dissolving views. Also have a considerable number of slides for sale. For details, contact:

Michael Verker (See "New Members" list for address)

Trade: I have a fine 14 volume set of Stoddard's books on his lantern lectures that appear to have had little use. I would be glad to trade these for books about early movie cameras. Anyone interested?

Wes Lambert

NEW MEMBERS

*John C. Borton, Jr. (Terry) (203) 345-2574 home phone
Bridge Road (203) 347-7251 bus. phone
Haddam, Conn. 06438
Interests: All lanterns, slides, literature. Will buy/sell/trade. Gives shows.
Occupation: Editor, The Weekly Reader

*Michael Verker (215) 735-6966 bus. phone
M. L. Strong Associates
1228 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19107
Interests: Temperance and "moral lesson" sets, dissolving views, pre-Victorian rounds, military, nautical, expositions, slaves/blacks; slides and lanterns.
Occupation: Entrepreneur, antiques broker, energy consultant

*Arie Verloop (206) 881-5627 home phone
14616 N.E. 36th, Apt. E-10
Bellevue, Wa. 98007
Interests: Ernst Planck lanterns & slides. Eager to learn more about magic lanterns. Hopes to give shows and see them.
Occupation: Chemical engineer

*Jay Ruby (215) 242-1878 home phone
447 E. Mt. Airy Avenue (215) 787-7513 bus. phone
Philadelphia, Pa. 19119
Interests: Illustrated lectures using magic lanterns, steropticans and motion pictures 1875-1915. A researcher, he needs to find literature, lectures and catalogs on the uses of the above.
Biography: Assoc. Professor of Anthropology, Temple University, Phila. Editor "Studies in Visual Communications." Author of books and articles - film, photography, visual communications and American culture.

*William Anderson Photography, Inc. (602) 881-6181 bus. phone
4636 East Grant Road
Tucson, Arizona 85712